

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1 (original): A method of creating a depth map including the steps of:

- assigning a depth to at least one pixel or portion of an image;
- determining relative location and image characteristics for each said at least one pixel or portion of said image;
- utilising said depth(s), image characteristics and respective relative location to determine a configuration of a first algorithm to ascertain depth characteristics as a function of relative location and image characteristics;
- utilising said first algorithm to calculate a depth characteristic for each pixel or portion of said image;
- wherein said depth characteristics form a depth map for said image.

2 (original): A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein said image characteristics include RGB values.

3 (original): A method as claimed in claim 1 further including the step of reassigning a depth to any pixel or portion of said image to correct for any inconsistencies.

4 (original): A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein said image characteristics include at least one of luminance, chrominance, contrast or spatial measurements.

5 (original): A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein said first algorithm may be represented by the equation:

$$z=f(x,y,R,G,B)$$

where x and y define the relative location of a sample.

6 (original): A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein a learning algorithm is utilised to determine the configuration of said first algorithm.

7 (original): A method as claimed in claim 6, wherein for each pixel in the image, the learning algorithm computes:

$$z_n = k_a \cdot x_n + k_b \cdot y_n + k_c \cdot R_n + k_d \cdot G_n + k_e \cdot B_n$$

where

n is the n th pixel in the key-frame image

z_n is the value of the depth assigned to the pixel at x_n, y_n

k_a to k_e are constants and are determined by the algorithm

R_n is the value of the Red component of the pixel at x_n, y_n

G_n is the value of the Green component of the pixel at x_n, y_n

B_n is the value of the Blue component of the pixel at x_n, y_n

8 (original): A method as claimed in claim 6, wherein a random component is introduced to the learning algorithm to reduce over-training.

9 (original): A method as claimed in claim 8, wherein said random component is a small positive or negative random number.

10 (original): A method as claimed in claim 7, wherein said learning algorithm initially identifies pixels having similar characteristics to a known pixel.

11 (original): A method as claimed in claim 10, wherein similar pixels are searched for within a search radius.

12 (original): A method as claimed in claim 11, wherein said search radius varies for each characteristic.

13 (original): A method as claimed claim 11, wherein the depth of a pixel is determined by a weighted average of distances from similar pixels.

14 (original): A method as claimed in claim 13, wherein weights are inversely proportioned to distance.

15 (original): A method as claimed in claim 6, wherein each characteristic is divided or partitioned into a set of regions and a depth value assigned based on the region which is occupied.

16 (original): A method of creating a depth map including the steps of:

- assigning a depth to at least one pixel or portion of an image;
- determining x,y coordinates and image characteristics for each said at least one pixel or portion of said image;

- utilising said depth(s), image characteristics and respective x,y coordinates to determine a first algorithm to ascertain depth characteristics as a function of x,y coordinates and image characteristics;

- utilising said first algorithm to calculate a depth characteristic for each pixel or portion of said image;

- wherein said depth characteristics form a depth map for said image.

17 (original): A method as claimed in claim 16, wherein said image characteristics include RGB values.

18 (original): A method as claimed in claim 16 further including the step of reassigning a depth to any pixel or portion of said image to correct for any inconsistencies.

19 (original): A method as claimed in claim 16, wherein said image characteristics include at least one of luminance, chrominance, contrast or spatial measurements.

20 (original): A method as claimed in claim 16, wherein said first algorithm may be represented by the equation:

$$z=f(x,y,R,G,B)$$

where x and y define the relative location of a sample.

21 (original): A method as claimed in claim 16, wherein a learning algorithm is utilised to determine the configuration of said first algorithm.

22 (original): A method as claimed in claim 21, wherein for each pixel in the image, the learning algorithm computes:

$$z_n = k_a \cdot x_n + k_b \cdot y_n + k_c \cdot R_n + k_d \cdot G_n + k_e \cdot B_n$$

where

n is the n th pixel in the key-frame image

z_n is the value of the depth assigned to the pixel at x_n, y_n

k_a to k_e are constants and are determined by the algorithm

R_n is the value of the Red component of the pixel at x_n, y_n

G_n is the value of the Green component of the pixel at x_n, y_n

B_n is the value of the Blue component of the pixel at x_n, y_n .

23 (original): A method as claimed in claim 21, wherein a random component is introduced to the learning algorithm to reduce over-training.

24 (original): A method as claimed in claim 23, wherein said random component is a small positive or negative random number.

25 (original): A method as claimed in claim 21, wherein said learning algorithm initially identifies pixels having similar characteristics to a known pixel.

26 (original): A method as claimed in claim 25, wherein similar pixels are searched for within a search radius.

27 (original): A method as claimed in claim 26, wherein said search radius varies for each characteristic.

28 (original): A method as claimed in of claim 25, wherein the depth of a pixel is determined by a weighted average of distances from similar pixels.

29 (original): A method as claimed in claim 28, wherein weights are inversely proportioned to distance.

30 (original): A method as claimed in claim 21, wherein each characteristic is divided or partitioned into a set of regions and a depth value assigned based on the region which is occupied.

31 (original): A method of creating a series of depth maps for an image sequence including the steps of:

receiving a depth map for at least one frame of said image sequence;

utilising said at least one depth map to determine a second configuration of a second algorithm to ascertain the depth characteristics as a function of relative location and image characteristics;

utilising said algorithm to create a depth map for each frame of said image sequence.

32 (original): A method as claimed in claim 31, wherein at least two depth maps corresponding to at least two frames of said image sequence are received.

33 (original): A method as claimed in claim 31, wherein said image characteristics include RGB values.

34 (original): A method as claimed in claim 31, wherein said image characteristics include at least one of luminance, chrominance, contrast or spatial measurements.

35 (original): A method as claimed in claim 31, wherein a learning algorithm is utilised to determine the configuration of said second algorithm.

36 (original): A method as claimed in claim 35, wherein said learning algorithm is one of back propagation algorithm, C4.5 algorithm, or K-means algorithm.

37 (original): A method as claimed in claim 35, wherein said second algorithm computes:

$$z_n = k_a \cdot x_n + k_b \cdot y_n + k_c \cdot R_n + k_d \cdot G_n + k_e \cdot B_n$$

where

n is the n th pixel in the key-frame image

z_n is the value of the depth assigned to the pixel at x_n, y_n

k_a to k_e are constants and are determined by the algorithm

R_n is the value of the Red component of the pixel at x_n, y_n

G_n is the value of the Green component of the pixel at x_n, y_n

B_n is the value of the Blue component of the pixel at x_n, y_n .

38 (original): A method as claimed in claim 31, wherein additional algorithm configurations are created for each pair of frames for which depth maps have been received.

39 (original): A method of creating a series of depth maps for an image sequence including the steps of:

receiving a depth map for at least one frame of said image sequence;

utilising said at least one depth map to determine a second algorithm to ascertain the depth characteristics as a function of x, y coordinates and image characteristics;

utilising said algorithm to create a depth map for each frame of said image sequence.

40 (original): A method as claimed in claim 39, wherein at least two depth maps corresponding to at least two frames of said image sequence are received.

41 (original): A method as claimed in claim 39, wherein said image characteristics include RGB values.

42 (original): A method as claimed in claim 39, wherein said image characteristics include at least one of luminance, chrominance, contrast or spatial measurements.

43 (original): A method as claimed in claim 39, wherein a learning algorithm is utilised to determine the configuration of said second algorithm.

44 (original): A method as claimed in claim 43, wherein said learning algorithm is one of back propagation algorithm, C4.5 algorithm, or K-means algorithm.

45 (original): A method as claimed in claim 43, wherein said second algorithm computes:

$$z_n = k_a \cdot x_n + k_b \cdot y_n + k_c \cdot R_n + k_d \cdot G_n + k_e \cdot B_n$$

where

n is the n th pixel in the key-frame image

z_n is the value of the depth assigned to the pixel at x_n, Y_n

k_a to k_e are constants and are determined by the algorithm

R_n is the value of the Red component of the pixel at x_n, y_n

G_n is the value of the Green component of the pixel at x_n, y_n

B_n is the value of the Blue component of the pixel at x_n, y_n .

46 (original): A method as claimed in claim 39, wherein additional algorithm configurations are created for each pair of adjacent frames for which depth maps have been received.

47 (original): A method of creating a series of depth maps for an image sequence including the steps of:

receiving depth maps for at least two key frames of said image sequence;

utilising said depth maps to determine a second algorithm to ascertain the depth characteristics as a function of x, y coordinates and image characteristics;

utilising said algorithm to create a depth map of each frame of said image sequence, wherein frames adjacent said key frames are processed prior to non-adjacent frames.

48 (original): A method as claimed in claim 47, wherein once said adjacent key frame is processed, said adjacent key frame is then considered a key frame for creation of further depth maps.

Claim 49 (previously presented): A method as claimed in claim 35, wherein said second algorithm computes:

$$z_n = k_a \cdot x_n + k_b \cdot y_n + k_c \cdot R_n + k_d \cdot G_n + k_e \cdot B_n + k_f \cdot T$$

where:

n is the n th pixel in the image

z_n is the value of the depth assigned to the pixel at x_n, y_n

k_a to k_f are constants previously determined by the algorithm

R_n is the value of the Red component of the pixel at x_n, y_n

G_n is the value of the Green component of the pixel at x_n, y_n

B_n is the value of the Blue component of the pixel at x_n, y_n

T is a measurement of time, for this particular frame in the sequence.

50 (original): A method of creating a series of depth maps for an image sequence including the steps of:

selecting at least one key frame from said image sequence;

for each at least one key frame assigning a depth to at least one pixel or portion of each frame;

determining relative location and image characteristics for each said at least one pixel or portion of each said key frame;

utilising said depth(s), image characteristics and respective relative location for each said at least one key frame to determine a first configuration of a first algorithm for each said at least one frame to ascertain depth characteristics as a function of relative location and depth characteristics;

utilising said first algorithm to calculate depth characteristics for each pixel or portion of each said at least one key frame;

wherein said depth characteristics form a depth map for each said at least one key frame;

utilising each depth map to determine a second configuration of a second algorithm to ascertain the depth characteristics for each frame as a function of relative location and image characteristics;

utilising said second algorithm to create respective depth maps for each frame of said image sequence.

51 (original): A method as claimed in claim 50, wherein frames adjacent said key frames are processed prior to non-adjacent frames.

52 (original): A method as claimed in claim 51, wherein following processing adjacent frames are considered as key frames for further processing.

53 (original): A method of encoding a series of frames including transmitting at least one mapping function together with said frames, wherein said mapping function includes an algorithm to ascertain depth characteristics as a function of relative location and image characteristics.

54 (original): A method as claim in claim 53, wherein said image characteristics include RGB values.

55 (original): A method as claimed in claim 53, wherein said image characteristics include at least one of luminance, chrominance, contrast or spatial measurements,

56 (original): A method as claimed in claim 53, wherein a learning algorithm is utilised to determine said mapping function.

57 (original): A method as claimed in claim 56, wherein said learning algorithm is one of back propagation algorithm, C4.5 algorithm, or K-means algorithm.

58 (original): A method as claimed in claim 56, wherein said mapping function computes:

$$z_n = k_a \cdot x_n + k_b \cdot y_n + k_c \cdot R_n + k_d \cdot G_n + k_e \cdot B_n$$

where

n is the n th pixel in the key-frame image

z_n is the value of the depth assigned to the pixel at x_n, Y_n

k_a to k_e are constants and are determined by the algorithm

R_n is the value of the Red component of the pixel at x_n, y_n

G_n is the value of the Green component of the pixel at x_n, y_n

B_n is the value of the Blue component of the pixel at x_n, y_n .

59 (original): A method as claimed in claim 53, wherein additional algorithms are created for each pair of frames for which depth maps have been received.

60 (previously presented) A method as claimed in claim 43, wherein said second algorithm computes:

$$z_n = k_a \cdot x_n + k_b \cdot y_n + k_c \cdot R_n + k_d \cdot G_n + k_e \cdot B_n + k_f \cdot T$$

where:

n is the n th pixel in the image

z_n is the value of the depth assigned to the pixel at x_n, y_n

k_a to k_f are constants previously determined by the algorithm

R_n is the value of the Red component of the pixel at x_n, y_n

G_n is the value of the Green component of the pixel at x_n, y_n

B_n is the value of the Blue component of the pixel at x_n, y_n

T is a measurement of time, for this particular frame in the sequence.

61 (previously presented) A method as claimed in claim 47, wherein said second algorithm computes:

$$z_n = k_a \cdot x_n + k_b \cdot y_n + k_c \cdot R_n + k_d \cdot G_n + k_e \cdot B_n + k_f \cdot T$$

where:

n is the n th pixel in the image

z_n is the value of the depth assigned to the pixel at x_n, y_n

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k_a to k_f are constants previously determined by the algorithm

R_n is the value of the Red component of the pixel at x_n, y_n

G_n is the value of the Green component of the pixel at x_n, y_n

B_n is the value of the Blue component of the pixel at x_n, y_n

T is a measurement of time, for this particular frame in the sequence.